

Heroes of The Heinlein

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Summary: Space AU - Hiccup and Toothless are two soldiers on the passenger ship "The Heinlein" when its boarded by a violent political group called the Separatists. Can they hold them off or will they need some extra help?

Heroes of The Heinlein

The Heinlein was a beautiful ship, an excellent model of innovation and luxury in the year 2108. It was one of the few passenger carriers built by an Earth corporation. Most of the carriers were built and owned by other non-Earth corporations, so this one made the Earthlings quite proud.

But just now, two small carriers blasted through The Heinlein's exterior and Separatist forces boarded the ship. Their ultimate goal: to take the space vessel and its passengers captive. They wanted to lash out at the Confederation of Interplanetary Governments for what they believed to be extremely punitive restrictions on human colonization. The Separatists were normally a nuisance, attacking Confederate patrol ships, randomly attacking shipyards and satellite stations under Confederate command, and generally living in the outskirts of the universe where the Confederation would have no interest of patrolling.

But today was different.

The Separatists were just going around, rounding up the aliens, and executing them mercilessly. They wanted to make a statement and that's what they were doing.

Hiccup hid behind a doorway and loaded a fresh cartridge into his assault rifle. He listened for the gun to click and give him a green light on his scope.

There was a rumbling in his earpiece and he pressed a button on his

gauntlet. "How many are there? Two in the next room? Give me three minutes and I'll meet you in the hallway."

Hiccup took a deep breath and put his hand over the door console. He pressed the open button and took cover next to the doorway.

The door hissed open and someone shouted, "Who's there?" He could hear footsteps approaching and when he saw a foot stick out the door he turned and unloaded a short burst of bullets into a man with white armor.

"There's someone here!" the second man shouted as he ran into the room.

Before he could pull out his own gun, Hiccup sprayed the man with his rifle and watched him crumple to the ground.

He took cover behind the doorway and heard bullets being fired from the other room. He looked down at the two Separatist bodies, blood leaking through the bullet holes in their white plate armor and saw a faint reflection of the person reloading a pistol in their armor.

He went through the door, spotted the Separatist with the pistol, and fired three shots into his chest before he could even raise his gun. He pointed his gun throughout the room, inspecting the damage, and sighed. The room was clear, there were three dead Separatists, and he still had a little over two thirds of his clip left! Little victories, that's what it was all about.

Hiccup brushed brushed a lock of russet hair out of his face and wiped some of the sweat forming on his brow. He dusted something off of his black armor and looked at down at his gauntlet. He took a deep breath and took cover behind another doorway leading into the hallway. He placed his hand over the door panel and held his gun close as it hissed open. He peeked through the doorway and saw no one on either side.

He pressed a button on his gauntlet and spoke into his ear piece. "Hey Toothless? Where are you?" He turned around and turned off the earpiece. "Oh. There you are."

An alien, about seven feet tall with black scaly skin, approached Hiccup. It looked at Hiccup, with dark green eyes and big black pupils, and started vocalizing a series of growls, grunts, and deep throaty purrs.

"Did you ping for reinforcements?"

The alien crossed its arms and its thick leaf shaped earflaps on the side of its head flared outwards before it growled at Hiccup.

"What do you mean you don't have your distress codes?"

The alien mumbled something out as it played with one black stubs atop its head.

"I've got it this time but you should honestly try to remember them," Hiccup said before pressing a button on his gauntlet. A little dot blinked three times before opening up a holographic display in front of him. He started pressing a few buttons on the display which then

opened up a keypad. He swiftly typed in a long sequence of digits and carefully pushed the enter button at the bottom. He watched the keypad disappear and a prompt open up reading, "A request for immediate action: Yes or no?"

Hiccup pressed the button that said yes and watched the emblem of the United Nations Space Security Council pop up and read "Request received. Await response from Command."

"Now we just gotta wait for a little bit."

The alien groaned and gestured with his arms, pointing out the hallway with one of its three fingers in one hand, and then tapped his wrist a few times.

"I get it, they take a long time, but we still need to respond to them when they pick up! If we tell them what's going on, we can push it up to an emergency response!"

The alien huffed and then grumbled.

"I suppose we can still kill some time while waiting for them. Is that a laser cannon or is that a machine gun?"

The alien gave a smile, which revealed no teeth but rather pink and fleshy gums, as it held up the gun on its back. It was a large, thick cylinder with a series of rings at the end of a single barrel. The rings began to rotate and click at random speeds and slowed down until a faint blue and purple glow pulsed out of the barrel.

"Cannon huh? Well, I can give you plenty of cover with this bad boy," Hiccup said as he patted his rifle. "Let's try to clean out this hallway and help whoever is still around." He pointed his thumb behind him, "Come one Toothless, let's go!"

Toothless grunted, in affirmation, and followed Hiccup with his gun at the ready. Hiccup stopped right before the hallway turned. He pressed his back against the faux wooden panelling and nodded at Toothless before peering around the corner. The coast was clear and walked around the corner, rifle at the ready.

They walked cautiously to one of the doors, Hiccup put his hand over the console, and waited for the door to slide open. Toothless peeked inside and grumbled something before walking inside.

The room was completely empty, sans the furniture and whatnot, and Hiccup gestured to check the bathroom and closet space.

Hiccup opened the closet and saw that clothes were still hanging there. He turned around and noticed that the bedsheets were unmade and two suitcases was still sitting in the corner of the room. He hoped that whoever was in this room made it out in time to find an escape pod before the Separatists could find them.

The Heinlein was a passenger ship, which meant there were advantages and disadvantages. On one hand, passenger ships have a wealth of escape pods. In the beginning, someone kept throwing around the name The Titanic and, as a result, there was a sudden emphasis on comfort and safety. Passenger ships would have the necessary amount of escape pods plus an extra ten percent to facilitate people

who would lag behind.

On the other hand, due to budgetary issues or frugality, security on passenger ships would often be lacking. Only certain ships with special cargo or very important persons (of the diplomatic nature not the celebrity kind) would receive extra men as protection. Many were offended, human and alien alike, and so the United Nations tried to fund for more men on passenger ships to appease everyone. So on average, there would be ten men per passenger ship.

Hiccup tried calling the others he was assigned but they didn't pick up. This meant either one of two things: they were busy fighting and had no time to pick up or they didn't want to hear his voice.

A third option flashed through his mind and he gulped at the thought. It was equally possible that they could've been captured by the Separatists and killed; but he tried to keep a positive attitude.

Hiccup saw Toothless open the toilet seat and mumble something into the basin.

Hiccup chuckled, "No one there bud?"

Toothless groaned and pointed out the door.

Hiccup understood and they repeated the process for the next five doors down the hallway, with the same results each time. Rooms were empty, evidence that people were there, no signs of conflict. Maybe these passengers got lucky and they were able to escape!

They continued down the hallway, repeating the process for another five rooms. Hiccup checked the closets to see if someone was hiding inside, Toothless checked the toilet bowls...for something, and Hiccup would return to his gauntlet to see if the UNSSC picked up. And each time was the same: no one was home, nothing in the toilet bowls, and Command did not return his request.

Hiccup sighed and started thinking maybe everything was going right for once. Toothless was sniffing at some hair conditioner and struggled to get it open with his three fingered hands.

Then his eyes went wide and his ear flaps stood on end. His nose slits flared and he started walking towards the door.

"What is it Toothless?" Hiccup asked before Toothless growled and ran out the door.

Hiccup was right behind him, taking turns almost at random. He wondered why they started going upstairs all of a sudden when he heard shouting. He followed Toothless up the stairs, saw Toothless take cover before the stairs lead into a hallway, and hid behind a wall across from him.

He peeked around the corner and saw five Separatists talking and mulling about. Three of them were huddling together, perhaps sending updates to their leader, while two were to the right of them having a little chat. They were all on a large indoor patio, one of many to give the illusion of openness and supply a real sense of greenery, talking and mulling about. The low railing on lefthand side let

artificial light down to the patio. Hiccup could see a few overturned tables, a wet bar sticking out of the middle of the right hand wall, and a few planters still somewhat in tact.

But what disturbed him were the dead alien bodies lined up at the far left side of the patio. There were five of them lying face down into the metal floor and their blood was starting to pool around them. One of the Separatists had the nerve to drop his cigarette into the pool of blood before returning to his group.

Toothless murmured something to Hiccup and pointed to an overturned table directly in front of the stairway exit.

"Okay," Hiccup nodded. "Ready when you're ready."

Toothless stood in the middle of the fork and faced the Separatists head on with his cannon on his shoulders.

"Hey! What the fuck are you doing? Get over here so we can kill ya!" one of the men shouted in the group of three.

A bolt of blue and purple energy shot out of the barrel and exploded upon the three men laughing at him. What was left were some scorch marks and some very crispy men. If their bodies were not completely obliterated, there were deep burn marks that cut deep into the flesh. There was no blood, just dried flaky crusts upon charred bodies.

"Get him!" the two Separatists shouted. Hiccup ran in front of Toothless and dived behind the overturned table. He braced himself and held his rifle close to his chest while bullets clanged against his temporary cover. He saw Toothless hide behind the corner and knew that he couldn't rely on Toothless for another shot like that for a while.

He returned fire and noticed that one man was hiding behind the corner of the wet bar and another was hiding behind a planter. He tried to hit the man behind the planter but to no avail. He emptied the last of his clip before taking cover by another planter closest to the wall.

As he reloaded his gun, he heard something whirring and clicking near the enemies. He looked above the planter he was crouching behind and then ducked as a long string of bullets fired at him and began to fire into the planter. He could hear bullets ricochet and dig into the soft metal and he waited for, what he believed to be a turret, reload or recalibrate or stop shooting at him for a second!

The rapid shots stopped for a moment and he tried to fire at the man still hiding behind the planter. The turret adjusted itself away from Hiccup and down the hallway where Toothless was trying to aim. Hiccup started firing at the turret where, although his bullets didn't seem to severely damage it, he attracted its attention as it started firing at his cover once again.

He pressed a button on his gauntlet and shouted into his microphone, "Toothless, on my mark, shoot at the turret." He waited for the inhuman rate of gunfire to slow down and stop before shouting, "Go!"

The turret trained itself down the hallway and started firing as Toothless soared out of the hall and flew into the open space of the patio. The turret was too slow and the Separatists were shocked to see a seven foot tall, black reptilian alien holding a bazooka. They could barely register what happened before Toothless fired his energy cannon at the Turret. Hiccup saw the melted metal remains of the turret and a man suffering something much worse than third degree burns from behind his cover.

The last Separatist, hiding behind the wet bar, started firing at Toothless and Hiccup couldn't shoot him at his angle. So he broke his cover, jumped over the corner of the wet bar, grabbed a handle of gin that was still lying on the counter, jumped over the other corner, and smashed the handle over the man's head. There was an unsatisfying thunk but it was enough to draw blood and knock him out.

Toothless flew towards him and started grunting something in appreciation.

"Thanks for taking out the turret." Hiccup curled his hand into a fist and held it in front of him.

Toothless then stuck the palm of his hand onto Hiccup's fist and gave a gummy smile.

"Ahh, close enough." Suddenly, Hiccup's gauntlet started glowing and a familiar holoscreen popped up.

"UNSSC Command," a cool female voice said. "What is the nature of your request?"

"Separatist forces have boarded the passenger cruiser H-343, The Heinlein, request for emergency rescue and reinforcements to secure The Heinlein and evacuate all civilian personnel," Hiccup responded as he placed the handle of gin back on the countertop.

There was a slight pause on the line, "Request granted."

Toothless grumbled something in a concerned tone.

"Forces are being mobilized as we speak, estimated time of arrival is two hours and twelve minutes."

"Thank you," Hiccup said as he set a timer on his gauntlet.

"Stay safe out there."

"Will do," he responded before cutting the line. "Well you heard Command, we have a little over two hours to stop as many Separatists as we can." A loud shot could be heard throughout the air, "Come on, we still got work to do."

They walked through an exit on the other side of the patio and tried to pinpoint the direction of the gunshot. Another shot rang through the air again and they tried to pick up their pace. They ran through another patio and listened carefully this time. One more shot sounded and Toothless pointed to the bridge that connected their side of the ship to the other.

Hiccup often forgot that The Heinlein was an architectural marvel;

the big open atrium in the center of the ship, the massive window that was above them, and the bridges that connected each side of the ship to the atrium. People could fly hovercars if they wanted to! It was just so open and so big!

The atrium itself was approximately the size of three football fields and thirty stories tall. The atrium was a complex and multilevel construction with stores, parks, and smaller walkways connecting everything.

As they came closer to the atrium, not only did the gunshots become louder but the sound of assault rifles were emerging out of the background. They saw a group of Separatists, clad in white armor, firing randomly at the third story of a storefront. Toothless took cover behind a planter while Hiccup took cover a few feet in front of him behind a wall.

Suddenly the shots stopped and Hiccup looked around. All of the Separatists were dead, a few even in piles, and someone was pointing their sniper rifle looking for another target.

"Toothless, cover me," he whispered into his mic. "Excuse me!" A shot fired at his foot and Hiccup dove for cover behind an overturned table. "I'm with the Defense and Unity Mission Battalion," he shouted as loud as he could.

"You mean DUMB?" a male voice asked in confusion.

"I didn't pick the name!"

"Well too bad because that's what you are! Dumb!"

"If you could please step out, I'll protect you from any hostiles."

"Protect me? Do you see the pile of Seps around you? I'm perfectly fine."

"Please put down the sniper rifle and come with me."

A white haired man peeked above the balcony and inspected the situation. "I don't think so."

"It's extremely dangerous!"

"Again, I don't think I need your help," the man said from behind his cover. "I've got plenty of ammo and I can find an escape pod at any moment."

Toothless looked at Hiccup and pointed at a ladder nearby. He put the pieces together as he saw the ladder connect to a catwalk and to the balcony where the man was taking cover in. "Can your sniper rifle protect you from a group of ten men in close quarters?" Hiccup before climbing up the ladder.

"That won't happen if you leave me here! I can hold my own! I'm a big boy!" Hiccup rolled his eyes as he carefully stepped onto the catwalk. "I've been doing this for a really long time! And don't just say, 'Oh you're just a kid, you don't know what you're doing.' Well guess what, I'm a kid who just took out twelve Seps on my own! And

don't even think of saying, 'You're too young to be holding a sniper rifle.' Age is just a number Mister Dumb!"

Toothless stepped off the catwalk and shimmied into a jammed open door. Hiccup followed him and walked into a small hallway. He could hear the man's tirade from down the hall and took the lead.

"I can pick off whoever gets in front of me before they can even see the whites of my eyes! No one, and I mean no one, has ever gotten within arms length of me when I have my rifle locked and loaded."

The man yelped as he was dragged up to his feet and turned around.

"There's always a first," Hiccup said with his assault rifle in hand.

The man was a bit taller than Hiccup and much skinnier (a feat considering his nickname was fishbones back home). He seemed around his age, maybe a little older by a year or two. His skin was pale, perhaps a colonist from some sun deprived world, and his eyes were an unnaturally deep blue.

"Are you going to kill me now?" the man asked as he put his hands above his head.

"No, we're going to drag you to the nearest escape pod and get you out of here."

"What! You can't do that! Not while they're," he pointed down at the dead Separatists, "still out there! You need me!"

"We're fine on our own."

"Really? It's been an hour and the only people I've seen with guns are the Seps and you two. Don't you have friends?" the man asked before picking up his sniper rifle and leaning on his it for support. "Or back up?"

Hiccup frowned and looked down at his gauntlet. The others should've pinged him their locations or at the very least responded to his message about the invading Separatists. There should've been something, anything, to say that they were still alive and kicking!

But nothing. Hiccup and Toothless could be the only ones left fighting the Separatists and the only backup they had at the moment was a white haired guy with a raggedy sweater, brown pants, and...no shoes? He wasn't exactly top notch military personnel but he was all they had.

He rubbed his temples, "Okay, we could use your help. Only as support, got it?"

"Hey, I don't mess around with Sep shit. They wanna play rough, I'm game."

"I don't even understand what you're saying."

Jack huffed, "I'll help you. The Separatists are bad news and I'll do whatever it takes to stop them. Am I clear enough or do you need a thesaurus Poindexter?"

"Yes, we're very clear."

"What's your name? Should I call you Officer Stick-Up-His-Ass or Commander No-Fun? Your face kinda looks like a potato, it bein' round and freckly. How about Private Potato Face?"

"Henry H. Haddock the Third."

"Oh I'm sorry your majesty," the man said as he curtsied. "Don't you have a nickname triple-H cubed?"

Hiccup sighed; he was about to regret telling him, he was sure of it. "Hiccup. You can call me Hiccup."

"Well I'm Jackson Overland Frost." He held his hand out, "But you can call me Jack."

Hiccup looked at it and shook it. Jack's hand was cold, unnaturally cold, and he wondered if he was hiding some cryogenic technology for his body temperature. Maybe he had some kind of implant that needed to be at a specific temperature?

He cast the idea aside as Jack started ogling over Toothless.

"Woah, your partner's a Dragon!" Jack practically jumped right in front of Toothless. "I didn't know the UNSSC was being _that _diverse! Do you speak English? You probably don't. Do you speak Kimchi? I bet you speak Kimchi." Jack started blowing raspberries in a complex series of short and long bursts with a mix of undulating tones.

"First, not all Dragons speak Kimchi. Second, he can understand English. And third, what was that? 'Hello, my gnome is Jerk First?'"

"At least I tried. What's his name?"

"Toothless," Hiccup said as he crossed his arms.

"Really? You both have really weird names but it's cute!"

Hiccup and Toothless both rolled their eyes.

"Jeez, you guys really are partners. I bet you even have the same bitch face."

They did.

"I overheard some of the Seps saying that they were trying to take the engineering bay! Come on! Let's go!" But before he could get any farther, Toothless stepped in front of him and Jack fell over as he collided head first with him.

"No way," Hiccup said as he leered over Jack. "You're our backup not the other way around. We're going to secure the bridge, shut off all thrusters, and activate the SOS beacon. It will attract other ships,

mainly military ones, to our location and they can help us out."

"Okay, so a hit and run becomes a huge mess for the Seps? I like that," Jack said as he rose to his feet.

"And my plan won't get us all killed."

"But it's not nearly as exciting," Jack wagged his finger at him. Hiccup squinted his eyes at Jack in complete bafflement. "Okay, the not dying thing is important too."

"Just a little bit," Hiccup said as he picked up his rifle. "The bridge is this way, follow me."

Hiccup lead them up a few flights of stairs and down a hallway. After about a minute, glass windows started appearing in the walls allowing people to look down into the atrium and the levels below.

"Hey! Look!" Jack pointed at a window in front of them and ran to it.

Hiccup and Toothless looked at each other before joining Jack.

"Seps!" Hiccup saw two Separatists standing outside a locked door one floor below them. One was browsing through a datapad while the other was simply watching. "It's just two of them, I'll be quick."

"No wait!" But before he knew it, Jack was already far ahead of them.

Hiccup and Toothless weren't able to keep up, maybe it was because he wasn't wearing armor, and were confused when he took a sharp right turn. They were only a few feet outside the door Jack went through when they heard two pops from a rifle.

When they stood outside, Jack was smiling enthusiastically while leaning on his sniper rifle.

"Are you crazy?" Hiccup demanded. "There could be more of them and you just gave our position away!"

"Or we just stopped a few more of them from coming through."

Hiccup was getting really angry at this guy. He was reckless, flighty, and he was really aggressive for a sniper. People like him only made bad decisions and risky moves, never thinking critically, failing absorbing the situation, never stepping back to take a breath. But then again, in training he was always criticized for not taking bigger chances. Someone said that he was all brains and no heart! Which was totally wrong...

Right?

Hiccup bit his inside of his cheek and took a deep breath. "Look, that's not cool, okay? You can't do that on the field and being your own person really puts us at risk. We work together or we die alone, got it?"

Jack blinked, surprised at how assertive Hiccup was. He was right though. This could've gotten really messy and if there were civilians involved this might've been a complete flop. "But it wasn't!" he defended himself. "I'll work with you guys as long as you give me something to work with," he reloaded his sniper rifle. "I don't like sitting around."

"Deal, now lets get to the bridge."

They ran down the corridor, taking some lefts and rights, but Toothless stopped and looked at a video monitor above them. He pointed at the few Separatists on the portion of the atrium that connected to the captain's quarters. Hiccup pulled up the blueprints on his gauntlet and started thinking aloud.

"Alright Jack, since you want to be part of the decision making process here's your chance. There are about five men in the atrium and three others hiding in the hallway that runs alongside it. I want you to give Toothless some protection by picking off the guys who he doesn't hit and I'll take care of the Separatists who are in the hallway. Got it?"

"Where am I supposed to find cover?" Jack questioned.

"I dunno but you should make it quick..."

Toothless ran underneath the overhang and charged his energy cannon while Hiccup ran inside the connecting Hallway. Still unnoticed, Hiccup ran towards an open doorway in the middle of the hallway. He heard the discharge of the cannon and still ran towards the open doorway. He aimed his rifle and started shooting at a man hiding behind an overturned table in front of two smoldering Separatist remains. The hiding Separatist saw Hiccup and returned fire, bullets piercing the wall and occasionally soaring through the doorway. He saw someone near the back wall of the atrium throw out a turret bot and he tried to shoot at him before it could load up.

Unfortunately it was too late and the turret started firing rapidly at Toothless. He had to jump out of the overhang and take to the skies, evading the fire of the other Separatists and the turret at the same time. Hiccup tried to give him support by firing at the three congregated around the turret and he luckily took one out. But the door at the end of the hallway opened up and three more enemies rushed out, guns blazing and sights locked on him. He jumped out of the doorway and tried to fire at the men still around the turret, not to kill them necessarily but rather distract them.

He jumped behind a planter along the wall and waited for a moment to move again. He fired again and ran towards another planter along the wall. The Separatist hiding behind the overturned table started firing at him and hit his calf. There was a clunk which nearly caused him to lose his footing but he pushed and dived behind the next planter. He then directed his fire at the man behind the table but failed as he took cover before he could even shoot. He moved his sights and took out one of the three people around the turret before they could even see him. Toothless was doing a great job of distracting them despite having a cannon in his arms that probably weighed like a toddler or a small child.

The opening back into the connecting hallway was only a few feet

away. Hiccup either needed to give Toothless more suppression fire but risk the Separatists ganging up on him or he needed to get back inside that hallway and attack them before they could emerge out of the hallway and attack.

He took a deep breath.

Cleared his thoughts.

And acted.

He ran right back into the hallway and saw the three Separatists. He brought his rifle up and started firing. He hit one in the face, a spray of blood coloring his neighbor's white armor, and fired at the next one in the chest, the bullets cracking against the plating before digging deeply into the armor and leaking blood. He was suddenly out of ammo, something he was afraid of before running at the final Separatist. An explosion outside caught the Separatist off guard which gave Hiccup the opening to slam the butt of his rifle into the man's face. There was a satisfying crack before he fell down to the floor and started leaking blood and saliva.

He took cover behind the same doorway and looked out; the last of the three men around the turret and the turret itself were ashes! But that damn man hiding behind the table was still shooting at Toothless and four more people emerged out of the door in the back of the atrium.

"Jack! Where the hell are you!" Hiccup shouted as he fumbled to reload. He couldn't find a new clip on his belt and there was too much adrenaline in his system to concentrate.

When he peered through the doorway, the Separatist taking cover behind the table was dead. There was a cough and one of the four enemies who just came out of the door crumpled up into a bloody mess. The same happened three more times and Hiccup noticed that the impact of the bullets caused not only their brains to splatter behind them but their skulls to explode in a bloody mess.

There were no more enemies at this point. The smell of charred bones, burning metal, fresh blood, and gunpowder filled the air. Hiccup wiped the sweat off of his brow before standing up and walking towards the middle of this little battlefield. Toothless flew towards him and gently descended before grumbling.

"Yeah," Hiccup picked up a Separatist pistol with some ammo in it and a few grenades. Who knew when these could come in handy? "Where's Jack?"

Toothless pointed behind Hiccup and saw Jack...flying. Apparently he hid inside of some sort of air shaft that ran up the walls of the atrium and was picking out the Separatists from that position. It was quite clever actually but Hiccup was a little more concerned about how Jack was flying.

"How are you flying?" Hiccup nearly shouted. "And why did you take so long to help out?" That part he screamed.

"Well, it takes a while to fly up a vent and to the fourth floor! I'm not made out of Crisco or butter you know! But who cares? What

happened to your leg?" Jack pointed down, clearly very concerned. "You got shot like ten times there!"

"How exactly did you get hover tech?" Hiccup nearly shrieked

"I uhh," Jack ran a hand through his hair. He wasn't prepared to explain exactly how he attained hover technology. "I stole it?"

"Whatever," Hiccup threw his arms up in defeat. "When we get back I'm going to throw you in the nearest cell block for stealing military grade technology!"

Toothless was garbled something and pointed down the hallway.

"Let's deal with this later," Jack rolled his eyes. "We gotta get to the bridge or whatever."

Hiccup didn't want to say this out loud but Jack was right. They were very close to the captain's bridge and they needed to move quickly. He lead the way through the door at the back of the atrium and started running up a flight of stairs.

"So," Hiccup said as they turned a corner and into a hallway with red carpeting. "You obviously got worried when that bullet hit me."

"No!"

"The girly scream of yours begs to differ."

Jack rolled his eyes and huffed. "So, uhh, what happened to your leg if you don't mind me asking?"

Hiccup checked the ammo on his rifle and saw the clip was empty. He sighed and stopped running. "Long story short, Toothless saved my life a few years ago. I lost everything below my midpoint of my shin but I'm still here. Also," he rolled up his pant leg and opened his prosthetic. "It doubles as a secret compartment for extra ammo," he said as he pulled out another clip for his rifle.

"That's pretty swag."

"What?" A look of confusion spread through Hiccup's and Toothless's faces.

"Oh, sorry. Old Earth expression."

"I was never one for retro stuff like Twilight and anime."

"You can never go wrong with the classics."

"I never said anything bad against Harry Potter or Beyonce."

Jack smiled at those references to a time long ago. They continued running until the red carpeting slowly turned into metal flooring.

"Are we there yet," Jack childishly complained. Although it was supposed to irritate Hiccup, he was a little concerned that they

might've gotten lost along the way.

"It shouldn't be too far from here," he replied offhandedly. They followed Toothless as he lead them throughout the hallways and corridors. The hallways seemed to get wider and the lights became dimmer, as if to accommodate those who were barely awake.

Eventually, they encountered a very large metal door. Hiccup went over to a console nearby and tapped a string of numbers on the touchpad. But he frowned in confusion as it blared red and rejected his code. He tried again but failed.

"Hey Toothless, can you try opening the door?"

He grunted and carefully tapped in a different code. Obviously the humans who built this ship did not account for other species using their technology. When the touchpad flashed red, he moaned out and started grumbling at Hiccup, somewhat aggressively by how he was throwing his arms everywhere.

"Tell me what's the code and I'll punch it in."

Toothless huffed and began mumbling out something that, to Jack at least, sounded like the words "blarg" and "honk."

The pad glowed a happy green and the large metal door began to slide open.

Hiccup rushed inside and sat in the captain's chair in the front of the bridge. He opened up a holo keyboard and started typing something. The windows that let in a dim light from the empty universe around them flared to life with numerous video screens, security footage, star nav charts, and other ship operations. The holo keyboard transformed into a sphere and he started twisting and turning the rings that moved gently around it.

One of the video screens moved to the center and started to flash red. Hiccup pushed a button on the sphere and the screen said in bold letters, "Emergency beacon initiated."

"Alright, the S.O.S signal is up and running." Hiccup got out of the chair, turned off the numerous video screens, and walked over to Toothless and Jack. "Toothless, can you turn off the thrusters?"

He nodded and went over to one of the lieutenant's chairs and began to fiddle with his own holo keyboard.

"So," Jack leaned on his sniper rifle. "What now?"

"We have to wait for the thrusters to shut down, then we can make our next move."

Jack sighed and started walking towards the windows. He could see his own reflection in the glass, a hollow echo of who he was. Underneath the bags under his eyes were asteroid debris from the local asteroid belt. In his eyes were the faintest glow of the nearest galaxy, Andromeda. In his hair, the quiet shimmer of stars near and far.

"You okay?" Hiccup said, a few steps behind him.

"Yeah," he said emptily while connecting the stars in Orion's Belt with his fingertips. He didn't see lines anymore, he saw pictures engraved into the sky. He turned around and rested his back against the glass. "What got you into working for the UNSSC?"

Hiccup put his hands in his pockets, "Oh I dunno. My dad works for a UNSSC satellite station."

"So you're just following in his footsteps?" Jack raised an eyebrow.

"No, not entirely," he said scratching the back of his neck. "I was in school to be a mech engineer or a plasma engineer but when I finally got out and started working it just didn't feel right," he shrugged. "So I joined the UNSSC."

"Do you like it?"

"Yeah," a half smile formed on his lips. "I met Toothless, get to travel the galaxy, shoot a gun, what more do you need?"

"A house? Maybe even a girlfriend?" Jack teased.

"Well I can get that stuff later and I don't really like girls," his voice dropped to nothing more than a mumble. "What about you?" he said trying to change the conversation. "Why are you here?"

"Get out see the world! See the universe! Meet new people! Eat weird alien food! Maybe even put some stuff behind me," Jack said forlornly.

"Yeah," Hiccup had flashbacks of his life back home. Memories of being bullied and shoved around every day of his life seeped back into his mind. "I get that."

"I just want a fresh start you know? I spent my entire life wondering what I want to do, why I'm even here, existentialist bullshit." He turned around and looked out into the universe once again.

"You're a huge help and I don't know what kind of situation we'd be in without you," he said.

Hiccup was about to turn around and speak to Toothless, who was probably still working on shutting off the thrusters, but he felt as if Jack needed something. He dared to put his hand on his shoulder and his eyes widened when Jack tensed up at the sudden touch. "I'm glad we found you before...something else happened." He patted Jack's shoulder before walking away.

Jack watched Hiccup walk away through the reflection in the glass. He looked at himself and thought of the people he left behind. The home. The friends. The family. Jack bit his lip and tried to think of the things he wanted to do.

Have a fresh start.

Start a new life.

Make a name for himself.

Find love.

He looked down at his hands and massaged his shoulder, sore and tense but now warm from...

He pushed away the thought and took a deep breath. Jack then picked up his rifle, slung it on his shoulder, and walked towards Hiccup and Toothless who were crowded around a single monitor. "What's up?" he asked as he tried to get a look at what they were talking about.

"So Toothless was able to shut off the thrusters," Hiccup said without looking at Jack. "But he noticed something on the security feeds."

Toothless pushed a button on his holo keyboard and flipped to a video recording.

"It looks like a few people are still holed up here. There are about four people down there and their location isn't too far from here. We just need to find them, get them to an escape pod, and fend off any Separatists while doing so."

"Then lets go!" Jack started running towards the doorway.

"Wait! We need to plan something out!" Hiccup shouted.

"There's no time! We can think of something when we're getting there, just show me the way and I'll back you up!"

Toothless garbled something and Hiccup nodded. "Okay, follow Toothless. He's got their location."

They started running, Toothless in the lead, and ran out of the captain's quarters and into one of the passenger wings. If there was one thing that Jack hated, it was normal people being dragged into violent situations. He remembered when his colony was attacked by Separatist raiders. Their crops were stolen, their farmland was torn up, and many people were wounded. It was a dark day in the colony's history.

They entered the passenger wing and Toothless started groaning something before pulling out his energy cannon.

"He says to be on the defense," Hiccup said as he turned off the safety on his rifle. "We need to be careful but we need to protect those civilians no matter what."

Toothless pointed at a locked doorway and Hiccup started pressing the activation codes. The door slid open to reveal a medium sized sleeping quarters and they all put away their weapons.

"Hello? UNSSC guards here," Hiccup called out. "Is there anyone here?"

Jack opened the closet and saw a family of four hiding inside. "Hey little guy, what's your name?"

"Jamie," he said cautiously.

"Hi Jamie, my name is Jack and those two are my friends: Captain Poopnose and Mister Scalybutt." He smiled as Jamie laughed at his joke. "We're going to make sure you're okay. Okay? We'll keep you safe."

Jamie sniffled and wiped his nose, "Okay."

Hiccup called Jack over and started whispering, "What should we do with them? We've got a group of four people. We can't leave them here or else the Separatists might find them. Should we get them to an escape pod or should we hide them here in the ship?"

"They're unarmed and there's nowhere safe on the ship. It's probably best if we take them to an escape pod," Jack offered. "But if they take the escape pod then who knows how long they might be drifting out in space?"

Hiccup sighed and scratched his chin. "Excuse me Mrs. and Mr. Bennett, can you come here for a moment?" The two parents left their children for a second to join Hiccup's and Jack's discussion. "We're going to take you to one of the escape pod docks. It shouldn't be too far from here but here's the catch. Reinforcements from the UNSSC are coming in a little less than an hour and they'll easily overwhelm the Separatists. You'll hide in an escape pod until they get here and they'll take you all to the nearest UNSSC satellite station. If at any time you see or hear the Separatists, you lock down the escape pod and you fly out. Got it? You won't be stranded for long and you'll get first priority as refugees."

The Bennetts looked at each other with concern and worry lining their faces. "Is that safe? Hiding in an escape pod, I mean." Mrs. Bennett asked.

"Escape pods are basically tiny spaceships. They can shrug off bullets and grenades like nothing ever happened," Jack explained.

"And how do you know that the Separatists won't come looking for people hiding in escape pods?" Mr. Bennett asked.

"They've already assumed that they've rounded up everyone that hasn't escaped already. They've already moved away from the passenger quarters and now they'll probably be retreating to the maintenance bay to escape since they've killed all they aliens," Hiccup said.

The Bennetts still seemed weary of the plan but they nodded their heads and both said, "Okay, let's go."

"Sophie, Jamie," Mrs. Bennett crouched down. "We're going to follow the nice men and the alien to safety. If we need to run, I want you to run as fast as you can. If something bad happens, I want you to run to the nice men as fast as possible. Okay?"

"Why?" Sophie asked as she held her stuffed bunny rabbit.

"It's to keep you safe. And Jamie, promise you'll take care of Sophie no matter what. Okay?"

"Yes mommy," Jamie said with a hint of fear in his voice. Sophie and Jamie both hugged their mother as tight as possible.

"Don't worry kids, we're going to be okay. We just need to prepare and sometimes talking about it is the best way to prepare," Mrs. Bennett said as she hugged her children as tightly as she could.

"Here," Hiccup handed Mr. Bennett the pistol he picked up from a dead Separatist.

"I pray that I will not need this," he replied as he gripped the handle.

"Me too."

"Okay," Jack motioned to the doorway. "Stay in between us, the two official looking types will be in the front and I'll be in the back for support. We should probably head out now," he said as he loaded his sniper rifle with a fresh clip.

"How will we get to the escape pods?" Mr. Bennett asked.

"There are twenty escape docks located throughout the ship." Hiccup said as he checked the ship's blueprints on his gauntlet. "There's one down this hallway. It's about a fifteen minute walk and if there aren't any escape pods there then we can go up a few floors and check the next one."

"Sounds good," Jack said. "Let's roll out and get you guys to safety."

Jack waited for Hiccup and Toothless to lead the way before staying close behind the Bennetts. They walked in silence, the tension in the air could be cut with a knife, and anxiety was high in the group. There were more of them in the group, civilians who were completely unarmed and without any sort of protection. This was incredibly risky but at least they weren't in the atrium right now. That would definitely guarantee some sort of gunfire.

They walked in palpable silence for the past ten or fifteen minutes. Jack noticed that Jamie and Sophie were incredibly silent and even scared. He wanted to calm them down even if the situation was not calm at all.

"Hey Jamie! Wanna see something cool?" Jack jumped up and started floating to the ceiling.

"Woah!" Jamie pointed at Jack and Sophie started clapping her hands excitedly. "How are you doing that?"

"I've got special underwear!"

"Eww!" Sophie said as she hid her face in delight.

"And the man on the Moon gave it to me as a present!"

"I don't believe you!" Jamie said as he crossed his arms.

"You want me to take off my pants and prove you wrong? I'm sure

Officer Hiccup Poopnose wouldn't mind seeing my butt."

Hiccup blushed, "I'm not going to respond to that."

"Between you and me," Jack hovered down to Jamie and Sophie, "I really like Officer Potato Face. I just like teasing him because its funny watching him scrunch his face like he sucked on a lemon wedge."

Hiccup rolled his eyes and and looked at Toothless when he nudged him with his elbow. "Don't you say it," he scolded him.

Toothless gave him a gummy smile.

They eventually climbed up a final flight of stairs and found an unused escape pod.

"Alright," Hiccup said as he opened the pod doors. "Everyone get inside."

The Bennetts climbed inside the pod but Sophie clung to Jack's leg. "Hey little girl, what's wrong?"

"Scared," she said tightening her hold on Jack's leg.

"It's okay, you and your brother and your mommy and daddy are going to protect you."

"But want you and Poopnose," she said as she buried her face into Jack's pant leg.

"Don't worry kiddo," Jack picked her up and cradled her in her arms. "Things are going to be okay. Okay? Just stay with your family while I take care of some bad guys and everything is gonna be okay."

Sophie nodded before being handed off to Mrs. Bennett.

"Bye Jack," she and Jamie said while waving goodbye as the three walked away from the escape pod.

"So now what?" Jack said as he joined Hiccup and Toothless. "What's the plan?"

"I'm not really sure but..." Hiccup's gauntlet suddenly started blinking and he opened his holoscreen to figure out why. If the UNSSC wanted to send a message, they would activate a face to face communication. They wouldn't send an unencrypted message...unless.

Hiccup opened the message and showed it to everyone. It looked like some kind of memo from an unidentified sender. As his eyes grazed over the contents, he soon realized what landed in front of them: a Separatist message.

"They're not just killing aliens," Hiccup said slowly, if only to make sure he was reading this correctly. "They're killing everyone on this ship."

"The Seps want to take the entire ship and use it for something

else," Jack thought aloud. "Another mission maybe."

"They could do it. They would just need a hail-command code from another passenger ship and they could go wherever they want. Passenger ships have the lowest level of inspections, all they need to do is show their hail-command, have a two second chat with the border guard on video comms, and wait their turn at the docks."

"And if there was an inspection, the Seps could easily overpower them with a surprise attack. It's the classic Trojan Horse. We gotta stop them," Jack said as he leaned on his rifle.

"Judging from the code," Hiccup said as he looked at the metadata of the message, "it looks like they're all holed up in the atrium."

"If we get their attention then we can do whatever we want. We can lead them into the passenger quarters and take them out one by one," Jack thought aloud.

"We can lead them into the maintenance bay and lock them in using the safety protocols," Hiccup offered."

"Or we can just have a big ol' fashioned shootout, a last stand kinda thing, like the Alamo. We took out enough Seps to fill a morgue and we've got enough of their ammo to fill a gun store in Alabama. We have plenty of firepower, plenty of ammo, and to be honest," he looked at Hiccup with the softest smile and the bluest eyes he'd ever seen in his entire life. "I'd like to go down fighting with two of the biggest badasses this side of Alpha Centauri."

Hiccup looked at Toothless who mumbled back something at him. He sighed and thought of the possibilities, the endless scenarios, the numerous battles that could all possibly take place with each option. He looked down at his gauntlet and read the timer.

"The reinforcements will be here in about twenty minutes, thirty tops. We'll confront the Separatists and give them a standoff. If we need to change our tactics, we change our tactics. Let's play it safe, play it smart, and keep each other safe."

"And kill as many of the Sep asshats as we can."

Hiccup laughed, "Isn't that a given?"

They started running towards the atrium in a very loose line. No one was taking the lead at this point since no one had an idea of what to do yet.

Hiccup felt a little uneasy, after all this could result in either great success or horrid failure. If there were too many Separatists then they could swarm them. If there were as many as he thought there were, which judging by how many they've killed already, then they would have the advantage. It was a numbers game that Hiccup didn't know how to feel about.

"Hey Jack," Hiccup said as he kept up with their running pace.

"Yeah?"

"If we make it out alive, I wanna buy you a drink."

Jack laughed at him. "That sounds great! Fair warning, I've got a liver made of Adamantite! You might be in the medbay when you have to pay my tab! And Hiccup," Jack's tone softened. "We're gonna' make it out alive. None of that 'if' shit. What has 'if' done for anybody? The answer is nothing."

They eventually arrived at a fork in the hallway. Going left would lead them up the side of the atrium wall whereas going right would lead them right into the atrium.

"Okay," Hiccup started loading his gun. "Toothless is going to take cover on the second floor patio. I'll be at the ground floor, east entrance. Jack, set yourself up on the fifth floor, west side. Toothless will fire first, then Jack will back him up as he reloads, and I'll be on the defense. That energy cannon is our strongest weapon and it can turn the tide at any second. Our job is to keep that winning streak going, no matter what."

"We won't be afraid to fly if things are getting messy," Jack said confidently.

"Good, because I have a funny feeling that this is going to get really messy really fast."

Hiccup split from the group but Jack ran up to him and said a few last words. "Good luck out there Officer Potato Face."

"Stay frosty," Hiccup shot back.

"I bet you thought real hard and long about that one!"

"That's what you're going to be saying in bed when I tie you down tonight!"

"Ooh! Hic! Gettin' me excited!" Jack swooned before joining Toothless down the corridor.

Hiccup laughed before turning around and heading towards his position. He actually blushed at what he just said, the thought of having Jack tied down and...well, you know.

Hiccup hid behind the wall that opened to the walkway and lead right to the atrium. He peered through his scope and counted how many Separatists there were. The rough count was at about ten to twelve. It was possible that there were more hiding around corners, behind closed doors, and in hiding spots acting as snipers. He waited for the first move and felt time stop at that very moment.

A bead of sweat rolled down his forehead.

A bolt of purple lightning shot at four Separatists standing in the center of the atrium.

Panic ensues.

Hiccup waited for his cue to attack; when he heard two shots from a sniper rifle he rushed onto the walkway. He saw someone in the corner of his eye, raised his rifle, and fired at a Separatist aiming a

pistol. Without missing a beat, he took cover behind an information kiosk. A slew of bullets hailed down onto the kiosk and Hiccup took a deep breath. Instinct needed to be tempered by decision making. If he acted too quickly, he could put himself and his squadmates in major danger.

Hiccup aimed his rifle around the kiosk and tried to shoot at three people aiming in Toothless's general direction. When he got them to fire at him, Toothless flew out and fired at that same group, obliterating them in an explosion of purple and blue energy. But in doing so, he attracted the fire of roughly ten other men.

Hiccup tried to keep their attention away from Toothless and managed to kill one of them but Toothless was getting pinned down in the air. He could only fly so quickly, the Separatists were coralling him into a section of the sky, and they were getting really close to hitting him.

Jack left his cover and took a few shots at the Separatists, successfully killing two of them which gave Toothless the breathing room to make an evasive maneuver and fly out of the situation.

But in that moment, three of the men broke away from the main group and prepared to flank Hiccup.

"Hiccup!" Jack shouted as loud, trying to be heard amidst the gunfire. He shot at one of the three men which caused Hiccup to turn his head and run for the nearest source of cover. A few bullets zipped past his head and even hit the ground he was running on. Hiccup jumped over a planter in the middle of the atrium and started firing at them. His grip was shaky, heart pounding with fear and adrenaline, but he managed to take out the two enemies that flanked him.

Jack soared up into the air and evaded all the gunshots from the ground with relative ease. But out of the corner of his eye, he saw a Separatist pull out a turret module and aimed his rifle at him. He was able to shoot him in the chest, armor cracking under the sheer impact of the bullet hitting him, but it was too late. The turret started to assemble and began to fire at Jack. He tried to fly out of the way but between the turret fire and the regular fire from the enemies on the ground, he was getting pinned down in which way he could move and how he could evade their attacks.

Hiccup tried to give him some cover and Toothless was still charging his energy cannon. Things were not going in their favor at this point. The Separatists were gaining an edge and...

Hiccup saw someone climb up some kind of statue in the center of the atrium and aim a sniper rifle. "Jack!" he shouted at the top of his lungs.

Too late.

The Separatist took a shot at him and fell to the ground. He could've heard a disgusting wet crack of bones from where he was hiding.

In that moment, Hiccup saw red.

He threw a grenade and shot down the man on top of the statue. In the

explosion, he ran twenty meters with no cover and no attempt at firing back at the enemies. His heart was pounding, his vision centered only on the fountain that Jack fell into, his breath was jagged, he could feel nothing but fear.

He pulled Jack out of the fountain and his hands were stained with red water and blood. Jack was clutching his side, a bullet hole leaking blood, and winced in pain. Hiccup needed to do something and do something fast.

He pulled out some medigel and applied it to his wound.

"Hic," Jack said with a wheeze. His ribcage might be broken. He might not be able to breathe. "I can't take care of m'self."

"But--"

"I'm fine," Jack coughed. "Now shut up and give 'em Hell."

Hiccup nodded and aimed his sights on the Separatists still firing at Toothless. He killed one of them, a spray of bullets through the chest, and then the one next to him, a few shots to the head causing him to fall down. He was now out of out of ammo, a tiny red light in the corner of his scope, so he tossed a grenade and hoped that it would kill someone.

He hid behind the fountain, pulled out a fresh cartrage from his prosthetic, and reloaded. When the light flashed green, he fired at an enemy who tried to sneak up behind them. His hands were starting to get really shaky at this point and he wounded the man in his leg before shooting him in the head on accident. There must've been an endless flow of Separatists and there was no way they could hold them off.

Toothless finally fired a bolt of energy at the turret and although it took out four people around it, it caused the turret gun to fly off of its support column and land on the floor. It fired randomly at Hiccup and Jack's cover, starting and stopping at unknown intervals. They were stuck until it either ran out of bullets or ran out of energy.

"Hic," Jack put his hand on Hiccup's shoulder. His hand was cold, really cold.

"Jack, shut up."

"No, please, listen to me."

Hiccup looked at him and felt a thick lump in his throat. The hail of bullets, the smell of blood, the shouts of men; he drowned it all out.

"Colony 82-EA," he smiled. "I lived on colony 82-EA."

"Jack please shut up," he pleaded.

"I think my sister's still there."

"Jack, you don't know what you're saying."

He winced and pushed down on his wound to keep more blood from leaking out but he couldn't keep it up. His strength was starting to fade. "Her name's Emma."

"Jack, Jack! Please don't," his voice was barely above a whisper.

He bit back his cries as the thought that someone was about to die on his watch kept compounding in his mind. Jack, this civilian, was about to die. Jack, this colonist who wanted a fresh start, was about to die. Jack, this person who swore to protect a family even in the face of complete danger, was about to die. Jack, this person who he grew to respect, was about to die.

He needed to fight.

For Jack.

He broke his cover and started firing at the Separatists one by one. His shots were precise, he used as little ammo as possible, and his efficiency was machine like. Headshot, shot in the chest, shot in the chest, headshot again. He blinked the forming tears away and forced himself to fight.

For Jack.

He heard more footsteps behind him and thought that this was it.

This is the end.

They were going to be overwhelmed by Separatists.

He fought for country, for citizen, for...

He hid behind the fountain and prepared himself for the final stand.

But what he saw were people in black uniforms, somewhat similar to his own, rifles and pistols primed to strike. They fired at the men in white uniforms and easily took care of them. Bolts of lightning, explosions, the coughs of gunfire, it swept over all of his senses.

The UNSSC finally arrived.

"Medic! Get over here!" Hiccup shouted at the reinforcements.

"Hiccup," Jack smiled with half lidded eyes. "It's okay, I'm gonna be fine. I've got a liver made out of Adamantite remember?"

"Yeah but you're entire body isn't made out of fuckin' Adamantite you dumbass!" Hiccup said through a forced smile. His eyes were red and puffy from tears of anxiety and fear.

Two medics with a hover stretcher came running over and hoisted Jack onto it. "I'll see you in the medbay okay?" Jack said with a smile before being carted away.

Hiccup could feel the tears falling down his cheeks. He almost fell

down but Toothless held him up and embraced him.

XXX

The next few hours were, to put it quite bluntly, shit. Hiccup was trapped in the medbay lobby reading holographic magazines about the Disney Empire, watching newscasts of (what they were now calling) the battle for The Heinlein, asking nurses for updates on Patient-192-JOF, harassing nurses for updates on Patient-192-JOF, holding Toothless's hand, and going to the bathroom. There was nothing he could do but wait and he hated that.

But it gave him time to think, recollect, and ponder what happened.

Jackson Overland Frost turned out to be one of the best snipers he's ever met. He had a level of skill with the hovering technology equal to Toothless's capabilities. He was talented but also a huge pain in the ass. He was pushy, and reckless, and loud...but he was also smart, charismatic, and cool under pressure.

He remembered how he was ready to go out and stand against the Separatists no matter what the odds. He remembered how he worked with Hiccup and Toothless, taking risks on his own but going back to support them. He remembered how he held that little boy's hand and told him that everything was going to be okay, when at the time, it wasn't.

He respected those traits.

Hiccup groaned at the pressure forming in his temples, a headache from not sleeping in the past eighteen hours. He felt a finger tap him on his shoulder and saw Toothless offer him two aspirin pills.

"Thanks bud," he said as he swallowed them whole.

Toothless grumbled something which made Hiccup nod his head.

"Yeah, I know what you mean."

Toothless started groaning and snarling and gesturing occasionally with his hands. He pointed at Hiccup, he pointed at himself, and he pointed towards the rooms where all the patients were housed. He then sighed and adjusted his seat, the chair squeaking underneath the inhuman weight, and grunted in a much lower tone. He then pointed at Hiccup's heart and put a hand on his shoulder before bringing him into a tight hug. He mumbled something before letting go and patting Hiccup's hair.

"Thanks bud, you always know what to say."

Toothless shrugged and grumbled something before leaving the medbay.

It was another hour before Hiccup decided to ask how Jack was doing. But before he could get up, a woman he never met before came up to him.

"Are you Jackson's friend?" she asked.

"Umm," Hiccup blushed. "Yes. Yes I am."

"He's finally awake, you can go see him in room four."

Hiccup nodded and tried not to run to the room. He took a deep breath and pushed the door console.

"Jack?" he asked cautiously before walking inside.

"Hey!" Jack threw his arms up and winced at the pain. "There's the big hero himself!"

"You're a hero too," he replied as he went to his bedside.

"I'm not the one who stood up from his cover, started unloading shots into the Seps, and walked over to give me some medigel! All without a hard light shield! You're crazy." Jack laughed before saying, "You wanna grab those paper cups by the sink over there? I think this deserves a toast."

"Where did you find booze?" Hiccup asked suspiciously as he found two paper cups.

"Technically, it's alcohol," Jack said as he pulled a small brown bottle from underneath his sheets and poured a little bit into the two paper cups Hiccup was holding.

Hiccup inspected the bottle which read, "C3H8O." He rolled his eyes, "Well of course it's alcohol, it's fuckin' isopropyl alcohol."

"Hey, don't give me your sass. I tried very hard okay?"

"If we drink this, we die."

"But it's alcohol!"

Hiccup rolled his eyes and threw away the paper cups and put the isopropyl alcohol back on the counter. At that time, Toothless walked in with a bouquet of roses and a white balloon that read, in bright blue letters, "It's a boy!"

"Is that for me dragon breath?" Jack fake swooned. "You sweep me off my feet. Although, I'm not exactly expecting...uhh...kids any time soon."

"Toothless isn't very good with slang but he's trying to get me to say something."

"Really? What is it?"

"It's that," Hiccup took a deep breath before going on. "I want to thank you for, you know, what you did on The Heinlein. It was amazing." A blush was starting to grow on Hiccup's cheeks, half embarrassment half something else. He looked to Toothless who then shook the bouquet at him angrily. He huffed and sighed, trying to regain some sense of composure. "You're amazing."

"I am amazing," Jack said with a grin.

"And I want to know more about you. I want to know more about this amazing person who I almost lost yesterday because," he took a deep breath and said meekly, "I think I love you."

Hiccup looked at Jack whose eyes were wide and jaw agape.

"And now you think I'm nuts or you hate me and I shouldn't have-" but he was cut off by Jack mashing his lips onto Hiccup's. The kiss was messy at first but he melted into his hands, his embrace, and returned the kiss with as much energy as Jack was putting in.

"I'd like that Hiccup," Jack said in a soft whisper. "I'd like to know more about the amazing person in front of me as well." Jack entwined his fingers in Hiccup's, "And I'd like to love the amazing person in front of me right now."

They shared another kiss as Toothless started blurting out congratulatory noises and clapping like an idiot.

Suddenly a group of four people entered the room and they both shoved off of each other, trying to pretend like they were strong military types rather than sappy love struck boys.

"Jamie!" Jack shouted with glee. "Sophie! Mr. and Mrs. Bennett! How'd you guys find me?"

"Toothless saw us on the docks and told us that you were here!" Jamie said excitedly. "We wanted to get you a present!"

Mr. and Mrs. Bennett presented Jack and Hiccup two things: a hologram of the news broadcast that read "The Heroes of The Heinlein" and a bottle of Champagne.

"Mom says that it's like grape juice but for grownups. I don't get it, what's the difference between regular grape juice and grownup grape juice?" Jamie asked.

Jack ruffled his hair, "One day you'll know kiddo."

"To the heroes of The Heinlein and to us," Jack looked at Hiccup who blushed at his sight. "The newest happy couple on the block."

Jack popped open the cork and drank straight from the bottle.

"Hey! Aren't you going to share?" Hiccup lightly punched him on the arm.

"Nope!" Jack said proudly before going in for another kiss from Hiccup.

* * *

><p>AN: Between trying be a college student and obsessing over Hijack, I tried to push this out as soon as possible. I promise to get back on 1883, I just need to get my notes out and pick it up. Now I'm going to watch the Superbowl and finally take a sigh of relief.**

End
file.